

## **Iowa AmeriCorps Members Continue the Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.**

DES MOINES — More than 40 national service members and Des Moines area volunteers braved the winter weather to bring MLK's dream to a local organization in need during a recent Day of Service Event.

In recognition of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, participants including Iowa AmeriCorps members, national service affiliates, and high school students from the Division on the Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage gathered on January 22 at the Ronald McDonald House to lend a hand.

This group made a difference for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House by baking and decorating cookies and cupcakes; washing windows; cleaning floors; disinfecting toys; sorting games and supplies; updating electronics, and shoveling snow.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps Program organized this opportunity in conjunction with an annual MLK Day of Service Event required for their members.

"This is such a great opportunity for our members to personally experience the impact individuals coming together for a common cause can make," noted the DNR's AmeriCorps Director, Tricia Rummer. "An event like this in conjunction with the MLK Jr. Holiday is a powerful way for our members to make this connection."

DNR members also completed AED (Automated External Defibrillator) safety training, toured the State Capitol Building, met with Governor Culver, and their state legislators to share their AmeriCorps service experiences.

The Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps has 58 members serving at sites throughout the state contributing to the Iowa DNR's statewide community empowerment efforts through generating volunteers, providing environmental education, conducting wildlife surveys, enhancing land and water trails, implementing conservation practices, and restoring wildlife habitat.

Most often described as a domestic Peace Corps, AmeriCorps is a federally funded program that enables Americans age 17 and over to commit a significant amount of time to voluntary service designed to meet community needs.

"AmeriCorps members are tackling our toughest problems," noted Governor Chet Culver. "They strengthen our communities, and improve the civic life of our state."

For more information about the Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps Program, contact Tricia Rummer at [tricia.rummer@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:tricia.rummer@dnr.iowa.gov) or (515) 281-4539.